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DIARY



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Dear Residents of Doddington

The Christmas lights will be coming down on Sunday 4th January. Well done to everyone, individuals and groups, who made the village look so spectacular again this year. All of the effort and expense is definitely worth it as we can boast one of the best displays in the area.

Thank you to Santa for popping in to visit us again this year, the better weather was certainly welcome!

The short, cold days of winter can bring lonely times, so if you know someone who doesn't get out much, maybe you could pop in for a cup of tea, just to brighten up their day!

If you are looking for a challenge for 2026, there are groups and activities for every age. So whether you would like to learn a new skill like drawing, share your talent with the youngsters, or just meet up for a chat, there are lots of groups waiting to welcome you!

We are looking for a **VOLUNTEER** to deliver the Doddington Diary to around 50 houses in

**COOK'S GREEN, MILLER CLOSE,
ANCASTER WAY and HUNT'S CLOSE.**

So, if you can spare an hour or so once a month, we would be very happy to welcome you onto the team. Please email me at doddingtondiary@gmail.com for more information or to volunteer! Many thanks.



From everyone associated with producing and delivering your village magazine, we appreciate your continued support and wish you all peace and good things in the New Year.

From Sally, the Editor

Doddington Diary Deadlines and Contact Details

Doddington Diary website: www.doddingtondiary.co.uk

Contributions: Editorials and payments to be received by the 15th of each month

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A Message from the Rector



One of the things I love in the six Fenland villages where I minister is welcoming the children from the various schools into church for their Carol services. Last month parents from Lionel Walden School were delighted to squeeze into the back of St Mary's Church eagerly straining their necks to see their child sing. And they weren't disappointed as the children had all learned their lines and sang beautifully, as they told the Christmas story.



One thing we can be sure of as a Christian country, is that by the time our children leave primary school, they will have rehearsed and learned the story of the Nativity. But like a lot of children's stories, there are things that are miraculous that don't tend to happen in ordinary life: like Mary having a baby even though she was a virgin; like angels appearing and speaking to Mary and Joseph; or a heavenly host singing to the shepherds. And what about the star that the wise men followed from the East?

As we go through the rest of life, the Christmas story becomes just like other stories we loved as children: old favourites like The Snowman, The Gruffalo or Little Nutbrown Hare saying to Big Nutbrown Hare, 'Guess how much I love you.' As children begin to question how Father Christmas has time to climb up and down millions of chimneys in one night, so the Nativity becomes one more fairy story that doesn't translate into grown up life.

Come the New Year, reality bites, we renew our gym membership, work hard to pay off the Christmas credit card, and struggle to keep our heads above water. It's as if we grown ups can't rely on fairy stories any more, and we become spiritually malnourished. What feeds our sense of wonder, our joy? What gives us hope? How do we recover from tragedy or trauma or betrayal?

Maybe, dare I suggest, that we need to keep feeding our spiritual lives after we leave primary school? The more I look into the bible stories, the more they resonate as accurate historical accounts of a God who knows us, cares for us, and, guess how much he loves us?

St Mary's Church Services for JANUARY



Sunday 4th **Doddington 10.30am Holy Communion**
Christchurch 10.30am Morning Prayer

Sunday 11th *Wimblington 10.30am Plough Sunday*
Manea 10.30am Holy Communion
Benwick 3.00pm Holy Communion

Tuesday 13th **Doddington 1.30pm Café Church**
(Church Rooms)

Sunday 18th **Doddington 10.30am Morning Prayer**
Christchurch 10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 25th *Wimblington 10.30am Holy Communion*
Manea 10.30am Morning Prayer
Welney 3.00pm Holy Communion

Methodist Church

Sunday 11th January : 2.30pm : Covenant Service

Monday: Future Stars: 4.30pm - 8.00pm (term time only)

Tuesday: Under 5s: 10.00am - 11.30am (Mothers and Toddlers)

Wednesday: Auction: 6.00pm - 8.00pm

Thursday: No events

Friday: Under 5s: 10.00am - 11.30am (Mothers and Toddlers)

For more information please contact Elaine (details below).

The church email address for enquiries is:

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For more booking information please contact

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St Mary's Cafe Church

A big "thank you" to everyone who has worked so hard to make St Mary's Cafe Church a success. It aims to be a new way of worshipping God in a more contemporary and relaxed setting. The four sessions held so far, running from 1.30pm until 3.00pm and starting and finishing with coffee, cake and fellowship, have contained a mixture of Christian songs, prayers and life stories reflecting how God has changed the lives of people for the better.

The Cafe Church aims to break down the barriers often perceived in a more formal church service, and replace them with a warm and welcoming atmosphere where new friends can be made as God meets us in the heart of Doddington.

If you feel that this is the opportunity you have been wanting, to find out more about God, his Son Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit, please feel free to join us on Tuesday, 13th January 2026 or any second Tuesday in the month in the Church Rooms, Doddington.

With every good wish for a Christ-filled New Year,

Jenny Holding



St Mary's Church, Doddington
warmly invites you to the

Café Church



at The Church Rooms, New Street, Doddington
On the second Tuesday each month
from 1.30pm to 3.00pm
(includes informal worship of about 30 minutes)

This is an opportunity to socialise, meet new
friends and worship during the week,
with free refreshments.

For more information
contact Jenny Holding
on 01354 740894 or
hldjen@outlook.com



Christmas Lights



Everyone on the Christmas Lights Committee hope you have had a wonderful Christmas and would like to wish you all a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

We certainly appreciate the very nice comments about the lights and your generous donations.

We will be taking down the lights on **Sunday 4th January 2026** and we apologise in advance for any inconvenience we may cause. We will do our utmost to keep disruption to a minimum.

We would be most grateful for any volunteers who could help us with taking down the lights and putting them away for next year. We will be meeting at Elmore's Engineering at 9am on Sunday 4th January.

Many thanks.



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Protecting Your Digital Legacy What Happens to Your Online Life When You Die?

January is often a time for fresh starts. We clear out cupboards, make resolutions and promise ourselves that this will be the year we get more organised. But there is one part of modern life that rarely makes the list, even though we use it every day. Our digital world.

Most of us now have a far bigger digital footprint than we realise. Online banking, email, social media, cloud storage, photographs, shopping apps, loyalty accounts and subscription services all form part of our everyday routine. The question is, what happens to all of this when we die?

Without some basic planning, your online accounts can remain locked or even deleted. Families can struggle to access important information, sentimental photographs or messages that mean a great deal. Each platform has its own rules. Some allow memorialisation, some require legal documents, and many simply freeze accounts after inactivity. Very few make the process straightforward.

Digital assets are not just about money. They are about memories, identity and the record of your life. If no one knows what you have, where it is stored or what you would want done with it, much of it can be lost.

The good news is that this is easy to fix, and January is the perfect time to do it. One of the simplest and most effective steps you can take is to create a Letter of Wishes to sit alongside your Will. This is not a legal document. It is a clear, personal guide for your executors and your family. You can use it to:

List your online accounts:-

- 👉 Explain what each one is used for
- 👉 State what you would like preserved
- 👉 Ask for certain accounts to be closed
- 👉 Note anything with sentimental value that may otherwise be overlooked.

A Letter of Wishes gives your executors the authority and confidence to handle your digital affairs in the way you intended. It removes uncertainty and makes the process kinder and easier for those who are already dealing with enough.

If one of your goals this year is to get your affairs in better order, adding a simple Letter of Wishes for your digital life is a thoughtful place to start. It ensures your online world, just like the rest of your estate, is handled with clarity and care.

The Estate Planning Red Flags I Look For, So You Don't Have To!

The new year is all about fresh starts, so why not include your Will in that? If it's been a while since you last reviewed your estate planning, now is the perfect time.

Life moves quickly: marriages, divorces, new grandchildren, changed finances... and yet many people forget to update their Wills to reflect their new circumstances.

An outdated Will can cause confusion, disputes or even unintended disinheritance. A simple review now could spare your family a lot of stress in the future.

At Peritum Wills, we make the process simple and stress-free.

Don't wait, take control today! Scan the QR code to read the full article and find out what to look for and how a little planning today can protect your loved ones tomorrow.

Regards,



Colin Barrett - Peritum Wills



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Lionel Walden Primary School



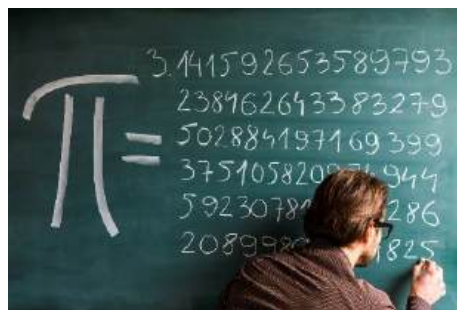
As we step into a fresh new Spring Term at Lionel Walden, we are embracing the idea that each day is a new beginning - a chance to grow, to strive and to discover what is possible. Our opening assembly will invite pupils to look forward with hope and ambition while also reflecting on the journeys that have shaped them so far. Throughout the term, we will continue to champion the values that define our school: resilience in the face of challenge, hard work in pursuit of excellence, and the teamwork and inclusivity that ensure every child feels supported and celebrated.

Maths

An example of children showing these values occurred during Maths Week. Maths Week 2025 took place between the 15th - 23rd November. This annual event celebrates the brilliance and creativity of mathematics and as part of the week, all classes across the school took part in various mathematical challenges, designed for them to think in different ways and collaborate with others. These activities allowed the children to think creatively about maths and to approach problems from different viewpoints.



In our assemblies during that week, the children learnt about Pi and what it means. Building on this, we also set a challenge in Key Stage Two of how many digits of Pi the children could remember after looking at them for 30 seconds. The three children in each class that could recall the most then participated in a final showdown in a whole school assembly. Well done to everyone who participated in this challenge!



Year 6 took part in a particularly special challenge, which was to investigate using the 'Buffon's Needle' experiment to find the true value of Pi. As part of this experiment, the children had to draw lines on a piece of paper before dropping matchsticks from a height to see where they landed. The children then completed a calculation based on how many matchsticks touched one of the lines. Thousands of year 6 classes from around the country also took part in this challenge to contribute towards a world record effort to find the true value of Pi, as this has never been calculated accurately before.


We have taken part in several competitions based around times tables. Recently, the school was a participant in 'England Rocks', a national Times Tables 'Rockstars' competition involving participants from primary and secondary schools from across the country. We were delighted to finish the competition in 327th place out of over 4200 schools! This showed a true excellence and teamwork as the children came together to compete against much larger schools.



A Sense of Community


At Lionel Walden, we are proud to play an active part in the wonderful community we belong to. Last term, our choir brought joy to residents at Askham and Doddington Court care homes and helped mark the village Christmas Lights Switch-On with festive cheer. We have gathered with families and neighbours in the church for our Carol Concert, and we have felt the strength of community support during our Remembrance Service. These moments reflect how deeply we value the people around us. Working together, sharing experiences and celebrating one another helps our pupils understand that they are part of something bigger; an inclusive, caring village community that we should all be proud of.







MARCH VOLUNTEER FAIR

Saturday 24th January
10:00am - 1:00pm
St Peter's Church
54 High Street, March PE15 9JR





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Festive Bingo Night

The Askham Christmas Bingo Night, held on Sunday, 7th December at Doddington Village Hall, brought together residents, families, local supporters and members of the wider community for an evening filled with festive cheer.

Askham
Care • Rehab • Life



The event was organised as a fundraiser in support of Askham's Residents' Fund and we were delighted by the wonderful turnout and enthusiasm shown by everyone who joined us.

Askham Village Community is grateful to everyone who attended, contributed and helped create such a memorable evening. Events like the Christmas Bingo Night continue to strengthen the bonds within our community, bringing joy, togetherness and festive spirit to all who take part.

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Askham Rehab Celebrates National Award Win



Askham Rehab is thrilled to announce that **Aliyyah-Begum Nasser**, Operations Director, has been voted **Rehab Leader of the Year** at the Neuro Rehab Times Awards 2025. This nationally recognised, public-voted award celebrates leaders who are shaping the future of neurorehabilitation through vision, innovation and community-driven practice.

As part of Askham Village Community, Askham Rehab benefits from a unique environment where families, residents, clinicians and wider community members learn from each other every day. Aliyyah has been instrumental in strengthening this connection. Her leadership blends strategic ambition with a deeply rooted belief that rehabilitation thrives when people feel supported, involved and empowered.



Under her guidance, Askham Rehab has continued to grow as a centre of possibility, embracing new technology, exploring progressive therapy approaches and continually looking for ways to enhance the experience for residents and their families. Aliyyah's instinct to bring something new, to question what more can be done, and to build partnerships that benefit the community has shaped the organisation's direction in meaningful ways.

Reflecting on the award, Aliyyah shared: *"I am deeply honoured by this recognition and incredibly touched that so many people took the time to vote. This award reflects the work of a truly exceptional team: colleagues, clinicians, partners and families who believe in delivering rehabilitation that is ambitious, compassionate and forward-thinking. I'm proud of what we have built together, and this inspires me to keep pushing for what's possible."*

This award honours not only Aliyyah's achievements but also the direction she has set for Askham Rehab, one that is forward-thinking, inclusive and rooted in community.

Askham Rehab extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported the nomination and voted. Your encouragement has made this recognition especially meaningful. Congratulations also go to all nominees and winners at the NR Times Awards 2025, whose contributions continue to shape the future of neurorehabilitation.

Girlguiding



During December Rainbows made their own songs using hand bells. Their tunes were brilliant, quite loud as they were all very keen to ring the bells! This skill is going towards earning their Get Grooving badge.

Brownies earned their Jobs badge. They were asked to think about where they see themselves in 20 years' time, what job they would have, what skills they needed to do that job. We were also very lucky to have parents coming along to Brownies for the girls to interview and find out about their jobs.

Guides made lots of Christmas Cards, some were delivered by them around the village and some the Rainbows delivered to Askham residents. Brownies artwork was used to make Christmas decorations which were also delivered around the village.

Thank you to everyone who has supported our recent fundraising painting sessions, we finished the year by painting Snow globe Snowmen and a Doddington themed Christmas bauble.

As we start the new year, we are looking forward to fun weekly meetings, day trip adventures, sleep-overs, camping trips, summer festival, Big Gig and learning lots of new skills.

If you are interested in joining or volunteering with any of our units, or would like to find out more about us, we would love to hear from you. Rainbows are 4-7 years old, Brownies are 7-10 years old, Guides are 10-14 years and any volunteer can be aged 14 + (Duke of Edinburgh Volunteers are welcomed!).



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Doddington Parish Council

Abbey Recreation Ground

The installation of the Aerial Runway (Zip wire) and a Cone Climber within the grounds, as additional recreational features for the children, is scheduled to take place in January.

Open sessions within the grounds to enable residents to see inside the newly refurbished Pavilion that can be used for community events, committee meetings, children's birthday parties and the like will be held soon. We will also be seeking your views on how you would like to see other areas redeveloped. Details of these events will be advertised on the Parish Council web and Facebook pages together with notices on the various noticeboards throughout the village.

Village maintenance

Work will commence in January to replace nine of the Parish Council owned public seats in the village. This will take place over a period of time as a number of the sites will require new or replacement concrete slabs to be installed.

Also in January, we are expecting delivery and installation of a vintage red telephone box to be installed next to the bus shelter opposite the clock tower. This will be fitted out as a book swap facility where residents will be able to deposit and borrow good quality second hand books.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a peaceful, healthy, and very happy New Year.

The Parish Council's website can be viewed at

www.doddingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

There is also a page to contact the Clerk of the Parish Council – office hours are usually Monday to Thursday 9.30-12.30 (outside of statutory holidays)

You can also contact the Chair on 01354 740323 or 07787 631153 or via email at chair.ruthufton@doddingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Postal Vote

If you are one of the 11,000 postal voters in Fenland that need to reapply to vote by post, don't forget to return your form. Following a change in the law, your request for a postal vote needs to be renewed every three years and should be done before 31st January 2026. If you haven't renewed by that date, your postal vote will be cancelled. The quickest way to reapply is online at www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote.





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Doddington Horticultural Society



Happy New Year to all our friends and supporters. This year will see the 79th annual village summer show being held in Doddington. Show day is **Saturday 25th July** at the Pavilion and Recreation Field on Benwick Road so please save the date.

July is a fabulous month for the village with two key events – the Carnival and Sports Day on the first Saturday and the Summer Village Show on the last Saturday – both are open to all, held at the same location but they have their own identities and very different activities.

The Summer Village Show has the giant marquee full of produce, flowers, arts, crafts and photography, a dog show, artisan stalls, classic cars and a variety of food outlets. This year we are planning the return of the arena hosting local talent and we are currently making enquiries to feature some new attractions.

If you know of anyone or any local businesses that would be interested in sponsoring a section at the show next July, please get in touch. We are starting to take bookings for stalls at the show already. If you are interested, please email doddingtonsummershow@gmail.com for more information.

The current long winter evenings are the ideal time to start planning your entries – flowers, fruit, vegetables, arts and crafts – there are classes for everyone. The Show programme should be ready in March.

Before then we have the 3rd Doddington Scone-Off held at the Village Hall on **Saturday 14th March**. Again, open to everyone and there will be the usual cream teas available after judging – whether you have entered or not. Please save the date and join us for a fun afternoon.

If you are interested in joining our committee and volunteers, please get in touch. Follow us on Facebook “Doddington Village Summer Show” for all the latest news.

Phone: Ruth Hopkins – 07815 462796 or email:
doddingtonsummershow@gmail.com

The Great Doddington Scone Off

Saturday 14th March 2026

Doddington Village Hall

Benwick Road

Adult Sections
Sweet / Savoury
Chocolatey / Cheesey
Adult Entries Are £1
Each

Children's Sections
Sweet / Savoury
All Children's Entries
Are Free

Tombola

Plant Stall

Teddy Tombola

Afternoon Tea

Live Entertainment

12noon to 1pm Hall Open for Entries

1pm to 2pm Hall Closed For Judging

2pm to 3pm Afternoon Tea Served

For More Information See Our

Facebook Page - Doddington Village Summer Show



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Happy New Year from the Recreation Committee

Start 2026 with a cheerful evening out and beat the January blues at our first Prize Bingo of the year on **Thursday 15th January**. It's a great night for all ages with plenty of grocery prizes to be won. Bring family and friends and enjoy a relaxed, friendly evening close to home.



The Pavilion is available to hire for parties, family gatherings, classes and community events. Please contact us if you would like more information on availability and rates.

If you're looking to do something positive for the village in the new year, why not consider volunteering with us? We are always grateful for extra help - whether it's looking after the grounds, supporting fundraising events, administration, sharing ideas for raising money, or helping us promote the facility and activities. There's a role for everyone, no matter how much time you can spare.

If you'd like to get involved, please come along to our **next committee meeting on Thursday 8th January at 7.30pm** in the Cricket Pavilion on Benwick Road. We are a small, friendly team and would be delighted to welcome new faces. Check out our Facebook page, Doddington Recreation Committee for more information!

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you in the year ahead.

To contact us: What's App/Text/Phone 07541 277119
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1st Doddington Scout Group



A December to Remember for Our Village Scout Group

December was a wonderfully busy month for our Scout Group, with every section throwing themselves into festive fun, new skills, and community spirit. From tiny Squirrels to adventurous Explorers, everyone found something to enjoy as the year came to a close.

Squirrels: Shortbread Stars

Our youngest members got stuck into some festive baking of their own, making Christmas shortbread and little houses from biscuits. With plenty of icing, decorations, and enthusiasm, they produced treats that were as charming as they were tasty.



Beavers: Giving Back to the Community

The Beavers spent part of December learning about helping others. They visited the Community Fridge in March, discovering how food donations support local families and how small acts of kindness can make a big difference. They asked thoughtful questions about how the project works and designed some posters about reducing food waste. They also enjoyed a Christmas sleepover at the hall, including helping make their Sunday lunch and playing hide and seek in the woods!



Cubs: Reaching New Heights

The Cubs took on a challenge of a very different kind — building some structures from large pioneering poles. Once their creations were secure, they had the chance to climb across what they had built. It was a brilliant mix of teamwork, problem solving, and lot of fun.



Scouts: Circuits, Cards, and Christmas Baking

Our Scouts embraced both creativity and engineering this month. They designed and made their own LED Christmas cards, learning the basics of electronics while producing some brilliantly twinkly results. As if that wasn't enough, they also turned their hands to festive baking, producing delicious homemade Stollen that filled the hall with the smell of Christmas and, they showed some great teamwork pioneering some Reindeer out of broom handles!

Explorers: Cooking in the Wild

Never ones to shy away from a challenge, the Explorers headed outdoors for a woodland cooking competition. Armed with ingredients, creativity and a camp stove, they proved that winter evenings don't stop true adventurers.

A Group Adventure: InflateBounce and Festive Cheer

To round off the term, the whole group enjoyed a high energy trip to InflateBounce, where Scouts of all ages bounced, raced, and laughed their way through the inflatable obstacle courses, along with Scouting friends from Whittlesey and St Ives. Some of our young people and volunteers took part in festive singing at Tesco, bringing smiles to shoppers and raising the spirits of the community.

From baking to building, singing to service, December showed exactly what makes our Scout Group so special: enthusiasm, teamwork, and a willingness to try something new. We're proud of every young person who takes part and incredibly grateful to all our volunteers for their time, energy and enthusiasm. We can't wait to see what adventures 2026 brings.

February Family Quiz Night – Explorer Devised and Led

You may recall back in October some of our Explorers devised and ran a quiz night in Doddington, alongside Explorers from Whittlesey. This was to raise funds for the activities they have planned for our Holland Camp in August. They will be holding a second quiz night on Friday 13th February. This time it is taking place in Whittlesey Scout Hall. Put a team together with up to 5 others, and book your places via www.trybooking.com/uk/FNPN

13
FEB
2026

FAMILY ? QUIZ NIGHT ?

DUCK RACE & RAFFLE






Scouts
1st Whittlesey

www.doddingtonscouts.org.uk
Charity number 1204134



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WHITTLESEY SCOUT HUT

FRIDAY 13th FEBRUARY 2026

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Santa Run 2025

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who came out to see Santa on this year's Santa Run. Kids, both young and old, came out to tell Santa what they would like for Christmas, to take photos and join in the fun - we even had a horse say hello to Santa, which was great! If we took your photo (with your prior permission!!) they are in our Facebook Photo Albums for you.

The Santa Run is a great Christmas event for the village, but it is also a fundraiser for us; the money raised from Santa's visit goes directly towards next year's **Doddington Carnival**, helping us bring the village together throughout the year.

Some years we have been washed out with the rain, blown to pieces by the wind and even had to trudge through the snow, but this year, despite the cold, the weather kindly held off and it was wonderful to see so many families lining the streets, waving, smiling, and getting into the festive spirit.

In amongst all of this, Santa Claus kindly drew the winning raffle ticket for our Christmas Barrow 2025 – a wheelbarrow loaded full of Christmas treats, including wines and beers, chocolates and nibbles and more, worth over £320!

Left to right: Megan, Rhys, Archie, Ali, Brett, Rich, (Santa), Erica, Adam, Izzy and Dan.

A big thank you also goes out to our 'Volunteer Elves' (some of whom reluctantly star in the photo!) that helped make the whole thing possible — from the organising, planning and prep-work, to the transforming of 'Lottie



the Land Rover' into the amazing Sleigh-pulling wonder she is! Then there is the difficult task of *driving* Lottie and the Sleigh around the village, all the time being precisely guided by our pro-like 'Elf and Safety' team. Then, more of our fellow Elves carried the collection buckets and kept everyone safe by the roadside. To **everyone** that helped, whether you're in the photo above or not, we love you all - thank you all very much!



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1st Doddington Scout Group

Scouts has so much to offer both Young People & Adult Volunteers - why not join the fun and adventure in 2026!

Contact us to find out more about how Young People aged 4 and up can join, or how you can become involved as an adult volunteer.

www.doddingtonscouts.org.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1204134

Women's Institute



Sally Shortland welcomed members and three guests to the December Meeting. After singing "Jerusalem" the speaker for the evening, Stuart Green, was welcomed. He gave the history of Sea Shanty songs. He explained that "shanty" is derived from the French "chanter" to sing. It was a way of keeping the rhythm when pulling the ropes of the sails on the old galleon ships. Stuart handed out song sheets and everyone joined in singing the shanty songs - he even brought a length of rope to pull so we could keep in time! Stuart was thanked by Elaine Stratford.



Everyone then enjoyed a delicious spread of party food provided by the Committee.

Sally Shortland gave a short report of notices and information and Gemma Watts gave information about events happening in the new year. Members were looking forward to the Christmas meal on 15th January at 12pm for 12.30pm.

The tombola stall at the Christmas Lights switch-on had been successful even though there was lower footfall due to the wet weather, but we still managed to raise a little more than last year.

Jo Dale gained the most marks in this year's competitions and she was presented with the Competition Cup. There were three entries in the Centennial Cup Competition, the winner was Sally Graham for her table-runner and she was presented with the Centennial Cup.



There were several prizes in the raffle.

There is no meeting in January, and the next meeting is on 5th February. Doddington Craft Group will be demonstrating the making of fabric Easter Eggs. The competition will be for an Easter Bunny. The meeting ended with the National Anthem and everyone was wished a Happy Christmas and New Year.

For information, please contact Elaine Stratford (tel. 462057) or elainestratford@tiscali.co.uk

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Doddington Meridian Markers

In the September issue of the Doddington Diary I reported that the two wooden markers that sit on the Prime Meridian line in Doddington (zero degrees longitude) had rotted away and fallen over. They had been taken into safe keeping where they currently remain.



Following conversations with several residents it soon became clear that there was an appetite to replace them and to raise awareness and Doddington Parish Council has been supportive of this idea. Over the next few months I will be providing them with feedback from residents, starting to explore any funding or grant opportunities and asking you all for ideas for preferred designs and materials. Options may include wood, stone, metal, recycled materials or a mixture.

Thank you to everyone who has already been in touch. Two significant things I have learnt are; that there seems to have been markers for a lot longer than we thought and that the Meridian Line passes through the Doddington Parish twice.

A gentleman from Benwick kindly called me to say that he can remember there being concrete markers near to the Benwick Road/Floods Ferry Road junction in the late 1950's/early 1960's because he and his friends used to cycle past them. Unfortunately, he couldn't recall when they were replaced with the wooden ones.

I was also told, and later given a map, to show the Meridian Line also crosses Forty Foot - the second location in Doddington.

My husband and I may have been spotted acting suspiciously as we drove slowly along the road watching our GPS on the satnav and waiting for it to hit the magical 0 degrees East and 0 degrees West – so we can be sure we have found the exact spot!

Please get in touch if you have any information that might be helpful, or you just want to show your support.

Ruth Hopkins Cllr.ruthhopkins@doddingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk
Mob: 07815 462796

CREATE!



The thing that differentiates humans from other animals is our creativity and our propensity to enjoy things simply for the pleasure of enjoyment. If you are to believe the traditional scriptures, the Creator created us in his image, meaning we are creators by nature. Birds have built their nests the same way for millennia, we have changed the world to fit our comfort

If you are going to live your life to the fullest, you are called to create things, make art.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| ☺ Doodle and draw | ☺ Write a rhyming poem |
| ☺ Sing in the shower | ☺ Pluck and strum guitar strings |
| ☺ Bake a cake | ☺ Wear crazy make-up |
| ☺ Tell a ghost story | ☺ Plant a garden |
| ☺ Shape clay, plasticine, or dough into something new | |
| ☺ Design a new building that could never be built | |
| ☺ Dress up to recite lines from a play | |
| ☺ Write a best man's speech for the wedding of someone you don't know | |

Create, make art, discover the pleasure of having done something just for the joy of doing it. It doesn't matter if it doesn't live up to your expectations, nobody else needs to know you have done it, but if you don't go ahead and do it, you will never know the intense creative pleasure that makes us human.

Have fun!

Peter <https://www.peter-studio.com>

Learn How To Draw

I will be running a **FREE** drawing course for people who want to learn how to draw, improve or would simply like to try something new.

The course is free, thanks to the support from Creative Fenland, 2020 Productions, Cambridgeshire Community Foundation and will be held from 1 to 3pm on Wednesdays 14th, 21st and 28th January and 4th February at the Skoulding Suite at March Town Hall (PE15 9JF). Come along and give it a go!

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For further information,
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Village Hall

If you are looking to keep the party going into the new year, tickets are still available via Ticket Source for the "80s, 90s, 00s Throw Back Disco" on Saturday 31st January 2026. Come and dance away the winter blues!



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Whittlesey Straw Bear Festival

This year the festival will be held over the weekend of the 16th, 17th and 18th January. The procession contains over 250 musicians and performers from various parts of the British Isles performing traditional 'Molly', 'Morris', 'Clog' and 'Sword' dancing. There is also American style 'Appalachian' dancing, street performances and Mummers plays. A decorated plough is pulled by 21st century plough boys and is now an established part of the procession.



Although the festivities begin earlier in the week, the Saturday is the only day on which the 'Bear' makes an appearance before the 'Bear Burning' on the Sunday. This leaves the way open for a new bear to be created from the next season's harvest. Come along to join in all of the fun.

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Map of the Manor of Doddington c1601

A copy of the map of the Manor of Doddington c1601, which included March and Wimblington, has been on display in the March and District Museum for many years, but three years ago a new copy of the original map was made for the Museum.

The original map first came to light in the 1890s when a March solicitor showed it to the then rector of March, Rev Charles Walker. By comparing those named on the map with his parish registers he determined that the map was drawn in 1601 or 1602. The map was presented to the March Urban District Council in the 1920s, but disappeared in 1974 during local government reorganisation and only reappeared when it was placed on loan at the County Archives in 2021.

As well as depicting each house and listing its owner or tenant, the occupied land owners and tenants are also listed. As this was before the drainage of the Fens in the late 17th century, large areas of the fens around the villages are common land and subject to flooding.

For centuries before 1600 the Manor of Doddington was owned by the Abbots and then Bishops of Ely, but during the reign of Elizabeth I, the Crown attempted to acquire some of the valuable manors of the Bishop. This did not happen before Bishop Cox died in 1581 and a new Bishop was not appointed for 20 years, during which time the Crown received the revenues from the manor.

When Bishop Heaton was eventually appointed in 1600 he immediately signed over Doddington and other manors to the Crown and within a few months Doddington was granted to Sir John Peyton, Lieutenant of the Tower of London. Sir John and his descendants retained the manor until 1920. The last Peyton baronet of Doddington died in 1962 when the title became extinct.

The Cambridgeshire Records Society have now produced a 71 page booklet analysing the map, including listing all the householders named on the map.



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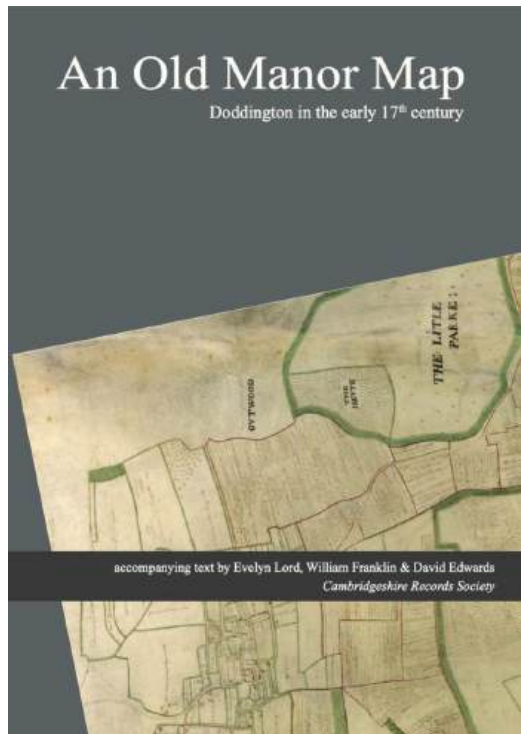
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Included with the booklet is a full size copy of the map in four sheets, the original is 8ft by 2ft 8in and covers approximately a six mile area from Primrose Hill, Doddington to Estover, March.

Copies of the book are available from March and District Museum at £24.

Also available is an earlier publication Jonas Moore's 1658 map of the Great Level of the Fens, also £24.

The Museum will open after Christmas on January 10th and on Wednesdays and Saturdays 10.30am until 3.30pm.



Doddington 80 Years Ago : January 1946

Private Fred Buck, 2nd Bn Cambridgeshire Regiment, the last of the Doddington prisoners of war held by the Japanese, arrived home. He had been captured at the fall of Singapore in February 1942. His return had been delayed, as owing to his poor health condition, he had spent time in hospital in New Zealand following his liberation.

Over 400 people attended the New Year's Eve party in the British Legion Hall. The Christmas tree was stripped of its gifts for the children where Father Christmas was ably assisted by Messrs F Kingham and JT Mason. Mr G Duffield as Old Father Time disappeared with the old year and Mr P Thrower entered dressed in a fairy costume as Miss 1946!

Mr and Mrs WS Fisk of Ingles Lane celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary. Mr Fisk's working life of 40 years had been spent as a lighthouse keeper, serving on the Farne Islands, Eddystone and elsewhere. He had been on duty at Eddystone when that building was opened by the then Duke of Edinburgh in 1882. Mr and Mrs Fisk moved to Doddington in 1930.

Messrs H Ellington and W Curtis completed respectively 50 and 40 years as bell-ringers at the church.

North Witchford Rural District Council, having received instructions from the Ministry of Health, had to reduce the number of houses to be built in the first phase at Manor estate from five to four.

Doddington 50 Years Ago : January 1976

Gales at the beginning of the month caused £25,000 damage to the glasshouses of the David Johnson Group in Benwick Road.

To be continued....David Edwards

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Food Bank Donations

Just before Christmas, members of Wimblington Slimming World kindly donated items to the local food bank. Dawn, who runs the group that meets at the Parish Hall each Monday at 9.30am and 11am, was absolutely delighted with the response and says a massive thank you to everyone who gave so generously.



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100th Club

It was a busy end of the year for the 100th Club. Although the weather was awful, we had lots of fun at the Christmas Lights switch on event and thank you to everyone who made our Tombola so successful.

The weather was much kinder for our day trip to Stamford. Members filled two FACT buses for a day of Christmas shopping in the sunshine!



Forty members attended the annual Christmas lunch held at The Three Tuns. Well done to the lucky draw prize winners and many thanks to Rob, Tina and the staff for the delicious lunch and friendly welcome.

Our next meeting will start at 2pm, on Thursday 15th January, when David Edwards will be talking about the Map of the Manor of Doddington which is thought to date back as far as the 1600s.

Membership fees of £15 will be due in January and we look forward to welcoming new members.

For further details please contact:

Heather Kilby (Secretary) 07870 483195

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A **Happy New Year** from Doddington Thrift Shop volunteers to all our customers, supporters and recyclers who again made the Thrift Shop such a happy and very successful event for the village last year.

December's Thrift shop raised a great total of £695 (£150 from cafe sales) for the upkeep of the Church rooms and our chosen charity for the year, Guide dogs for the Blind. Christmas decorations, mistletoe, books, cakes, clothes, shoes, household goods, plants and fabrics all found new homes!

There will be no Thrift shop in January or February but we will re-open on 5th March 2026. We hope everyone agrees that the Thrift shop's home made bakes are lovely, but to reflect ever increasing costs the price will be edged up a little from March to 80p - still great Thrifty taste, quality and value!

From the Thrifty team, stay thrifty til then and see you in the springtime!

Dates for 2026: 5/3, 2/4, 7/5, 4/6, 2/7, 6/8, 3/9, 1/10, 5/11, 3/12
We open on the Wednesday before to accept donated items from 9am to 11am. Hope to see you soon for more thriftiness!

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